

Daniel Wilkins Log House,
Smith Park,
Montevideo, Minnesota.

Chapman

HABS No. MINN-1-1

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Minnesota District

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
CENTRAL UNIT - ST. LOUIS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Wm. G. Dorr, District Officer
702 Wesley Temple Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn.

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DANIEL WILKINS LOG HOUSE

Smith Park, Montevideo, Minnesota.

Historical Data

Year of erection: 1865

Built for (first owner): Daniel Wilkins.

Original intended use: Residence.

Historical Sketch

The family of Daniel Wilkins lived there but in the spring of 1869 the Wilkins family accommodated the Matthews family by letting them use one-half of the house; just how long is not known but probably until the Matthews cabin was completed. It first stood about three blocks north and west of its present location, later moved to the farm yard of J. Harley Smith. The park is a part of the Smith farm. J. Harley Smith transferred the park to the city and later his nephew, R. F. Smith, gave the cabin. It was then moved into the park. Although it was never an established post office, mail was left there for the convenience of the residents of the community. The first Episcopalian services in the community were conducted in this cabin by a traveling missionary. Mr. Wilkins sold his homestead to J. Harley Smith very early. That is the cause of the confusion as to the origin of the cabin.

Mr. Wilkins and family had a martial escort from Fort Ridgely to here. The soldiers remained with them about three weeks. In 1865 the western part of Chippewa County had not been surveyed, so he really had no legal right to stake out a homestead here. The treaty of 1858 was still a canker sore to the Indians; I suppose that was why they took the extra precautions. Theoretically the Indians had been expelled from the land, but special permission had been granted to a few to remain here because of the fear that they would be persecuted by the warrior Indians if they were sent to Dakota with them. Their main village was out there on the flats west of the mission park [foot of Lac Qui Parle Lake], where the recreation park is now located.

By Miss Edwina Gould, Chippewa County Historical Society,
Montevideo, Minnesota.

Prepared by Charles E. Peterson May 16, 1941

Charles E. Peterson,
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THW 5/20/41